

April 4, 2006

TO: Authorized Representatives

FROM: Pat Reichert, Data Manager
Division of Special Education

Marion Erp, Administrative Officer
Division of Health Enhancement and Safety

RE: **REMINDER: School Discipline Data Collection Reports for School Year 2005-2006 are due June 30, 2006**

Each public school in Montana must submit a completed School Discipline Data Reporting Log by June 30, 2006. A memo was sent to school districts at the beginning of the school year - in September of 2005. All information concerning the school discipline data collection (instruction manual, FAQ sheet (frequently asked questions), Glossary of Codes, memo sent to authorized representatives last fall, and a worksheet to help you prepare for electronic filing) can be found on the OPI Web at:
<http://www.opi.mt.gov/schooldisciplinedc/index.html>.

The data to be reported are any incident that takes place during the reporting period (July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006) that:

- ◀ results in out-of-school suspension or expulsion, regardless of the length of time, for any enrolled student; or
- ◀ involves weapons, drugs or violence in which the perpetrator is a nonstudent.

The Web application has not changed from last year. However, new this year are training snippets that can be accessed from the Web application. These snippets are short (2-5 minute) videos that give instructions for the screen the snippet is located on. The snippets can be accessed by clicking on the "Incident Help" button in the upper right section of any of the three tabs that constitute the data entry screen.

Please read through the following issues that have caused problems in the past:

- If a school has no incidents to report for the school year, a report must still be submitted with the "No Incidents to Report" box checked.
- A "perpetrator identifier" is a unique ID (initials, numbers, or combination of letters and numbers) assigned by the school and is unique to an individual at a particular school. If an individual is involved in more than one incident during the school year, the same perpetrator identifier must be used for that individual in each subsequent incident. For subsequent incidents, the application will pre-fill the gender, race and program status codes if the perpetrator is a student.
- The application is incident driven - this means that an incident is reported in the application and any students suspended or expelled out-of-school as a result of that incident are reported under that incident. An example is a fight that breaks out on the school grounds and as a result there were four students suspended out-of-school. The incident would be reported as a fight and the four students who were suspended out-of-school would be reported under that one incident.
- Please remember that the definition of a "victim" includes an individual who suffers physical or emotional injury, loss or death because of a voluntary act by another person. The definition does not include a student in an event involving a large population within the school such as a bomb threat evacuation or a school lockdown. A validation check has been built into the Web application that will remind you of the definition for "victim" if a number of victims greater than 5 is entered. You can bypass the validation if the number is correct, or revise the number if it is in error.

Accurate data are essential in this collection because these data are used by the OPI to complete several state-level reports required by the U.S. Department of Education as well as to determine the federally required persistently dangerous schools designation. The data are also used for longitudinal studies in five-year plans.

If you have any questions, concerns, or problems with any part of this data collection, please contact Pat Reichert at 406-444-4430, or Marion Erp at 406-444-1951.